THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) As per information available, a group of farmers from Vadakkencherry in Palakkad district of Kerala have switched over to organic paddy cultivation.

(b) and (c) 13 farmers have switched over to organic paddy cultivation in 18.74 ha. The group was registered with Indian Organic Certification Agency (INDOCERT), Thottumugham (Kerala) during April, 2008 for organic certification. While the cost of production of organic rice is more during initial years of conversion, the yield gap narrows down in 2 to 3 years and comparable yields can be obtained thereafter. At that stage the cost of organic paddy is comparable to conventional paddy.

(d) A proposal has been formulated to permit export of certified organic non-basmati rice subject to a quantitative ceiling.

Devastation in agricultur due to recent floods in South India

153. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted any survey to study the devastation in agriculture due to recent floods in Southern States especially in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has taken any steps for providing compensation to the farmers affected by the recent floods; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Home Affairs is concerned in the matter and necessary information is being collected from them.

Steps to boost production of forthcoming winter crops

154. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of estimated production of Kharif crops this year *vis-a-vis* premonsoon estimation;

(b) the details of regions where Kharif crops have proved to be absolute failure due to the monsoon failure, indicating estimated volume of crop loss and those areas which got late monsoon indicating corresponding volume loss;

(c) whether loss of Kharif crops is expected to be off-set by yields of winter crops due to *inter alia* substantial rainfall albeit late; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to ensure larger production of winter crops especially in areas suffered by loss of Kharif crops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) As per the 1st Advance Estimates, production of Kharif foodgrain crops in the country is estimated at 96.63 million tonnes against a target of 125.15 million tonnes for the year 2009-10.